Rome Nov 24th 1863

My dear Tom

I crave pardon for my long silence
& do deem a brother's labors passing over
even when I wrote, your former long chatty
letter with all your doings in the two
parishes, indeed your perfect "organization"
all this was far more like your dear self
than the photographic long beard portrait
How lucky you are not to have to eat
maccaroni, whether a horror & dear
for some "beardies" have a compleat
beard, after they are unconscious of it so
if it becomes a necessity (fashionable) to wear a beard
(& it is now a close shave "upon it.") I
shall set up an artificial one, & when
I sit down to dinner take it off & hang
it over my chair — The Bricks daughter

very prosperly alarm you, but you'll be
pleased to know all - a dear old Fr has
purchased on my account bought a Roman villa
which he will visit for a month each year
to garden down the leaves & brown all the
rest of the year - I expect him now have
begun building up the house which was
destroyed in the siege - Now I propose
to make a farm of it, for a farm has
always been my passion & do turn it every
profitable account - for you see I have not
yet at any expence but hope on the contrary
to make out of it about £100 a year - We
shall see! - It is close to the city gate
& is a delicious spot - How it would delight
you if you could see & know the great
& marvellous success of your brother Joe
for I confess I am astonished at it more
as I cannot conceive that it arises from
any talent I may share & have -

I seem to have acquired almost despotic power for now the Governor of Rome lends me his gendarmes on every occasion & the other day Cardinal Antonelli asked what I had gained more power than any one in Rome for I had got the affections of the Roman people & also the government.— All I can say is that I am continually engaged in generous acts in liberating Italian political prisoners &c &c &c, all which is pranks me by the Papal ministers, altho' I always go about something antagonistic— When my own countrymen & women come to me the most polite way to learn about Rome & Rome-tines I get 50 visits a day & many of these from dear old Pa returning to Rome when my painting flourishes as my picture of the marriage of Cana (not such done) is thought to be my best work— So I am sure my dear Tom altogether I have at last got what you wished for me always a